

Message Text

PAGE 01 ROME 11385 182238Z

16

ACTION SS-30

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 (ISO) W

----- 020746

R 181555Z OCT 73

FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1405

S E C R E T ROME 11385

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, CI, VT

SUBJECT: HIGHEST LEVEL VATICAN CONCERN OVER PROPAGANDA ON CHILE

REF: ROME 10729

1. DURING OCT 18 CALL ON UNRELATED SUBJECT, ARCHBISHOP BENELLI, VATICAN DEPUTY SECRETARY OF STATE, EXPRESSED TO ILLING HIS AND POPE'S GRAVE CONCERN OVER SUCCESSFUL INTERNATIONAL LEFTIST CAMPAIGN TO MISCONSTRUE COMPLETELY REALITIES OF CHILEAN SITUATION. BENELLI LABELLED EXAGGERATED COVERAGE OF EVENTS AS POSSIBLY GREATEST SUCCESS OF COMMUNIST PROPAGANDA, AND HIGHLIGHTED FACT THAT EVEN MODERATE AND CONSERVATIVE CIRCLES SEEM QUITE DISPOSED TO BELIEVE GROSSEST LIES ABOUT CHILEAN JUNTA'S EXCESSES. REALIZING THAT ALLENDE'S FALL WAS ONE OF GREATEST SETBACKS TO COMMUNIST CAUSE, BENELLI SAID, LEFTIST FORCES HAVE GREATLY CUT LOSSES BY CONVINCING WORLD THAT ALLENDE'S FALL DUE EXCLUSIVELY TO FASCIST AND EXTERNAL FORCES RATHER THAN TO SHORTCOMINGS OF ALLENDE'S OWN POLICIES AS IS RIGHTLY CASE. BENELLI EXPRESSED FEARS THAT THIS SUCCESSFUL COMMUNIST PROPAGANDA CAMPAIGN IS ONLY PORTENT OF HOW COMMUNISTS CAN INFLUENCE FREE WORLD MEDIA IN FUTURE.

2. AS IS UNFORTUNATELY NATURAL FOLLOWING COUP D'ETAT, BENELLI OBSERVED, THERE HAS ADMITTEDLY BEEN BLOODSHED DURING MOPPING UP PROCEDURES IN CHILE, BUT PAPAL NUNCIATURE, IN SANTIAGO, CARDINAL SILVA AND CHILEAN EPISCOPATE IN GENERAL HAVE ASSURED POPE PAUL THAT JUNTA MAKING EVERY EFFORT TO RETURN SITUATION TO NORMAL AND THAT STORIES ALLEGING BRUTAL REPRISALS IN INTERNATIONAL MEDIA

SECRET

PAGE 02 ROME 11385 182238Z

ARE UNFOUNDED. BENELLI STRESSED THAT VALIDITY AND SINCERITY OF CARDINAL SILVA'S INTERPRETATION CANNOT BE CHALLENGED SINCE SILVA IS KNOWN INTERNATIONALLY AS ONE OF CHURCH'S LEADING PROGRESSIVES WHO, MOREOVER, GAVE TACIT SUPPORT TO PRESIDENT ALLENDE. DESPITE

ITS CONVICTION THAT TRUTH FAR FROM PICTURE FOUND IN MEDIA, VATICAN HAS BEEN IMPOTENT IN ITS QUIET EFFORTS TO CONVINCE ANYONE OF SAME. POPE HAS BEEN UNDER HEAVY PRESSURE FROM WITHIN CHURCH, ESPECIALLY FROM FRANCE, TO SPEAK OUT AND CONDEMN EXCESSES OF JUNTA. IN PARTIAL RESPONSE TO ACCUSATIONS THAT CHURCH REMAINING SHAMELESSLY SILENT, "OSSERVATORE ROMANO" PRINTED EDITORIAL REPORTED IN REFTEL. NEVERTHELESS, DESPITE VATICAN'S EFFORTS, LEFTIST PROPAGANDA HAS BEEN REMARKABLY SUCCESSFUL EVEN WITH NUMBER OF MORE CONSERVATIVE CARDINALS AND PRELATES WHO SEEM INCAPABLE OF VIEWING

SITUATION OBJECTIVELY. RESULT IS THAT LEFTISTS HAVE MANAGED TO CREATE SITUATION IN WHICH POPE WOULD BE ATTACKED BY MODERATES IF HE DEFENDS TRUTH ON CHILE.

3. BENELLI NOTED THAT, CONTRARY TO PRESS REPORTS, JUNTA HAD IMMEDIATELY GRANTED SAFE CONDUCT PASSES TO ALL PERSONS WHO HAD SOUGHT REFUGE IN FOREIGN MISSIONS, INCLUDING PAPAL NUNCIATURE IN SANTIAGO. JUNTA AS ANXIOUS FOR THESE REFUGEES TO LEAVE CHILE AS ARE REFUGEES THEMSELVES, HOWEVER, IT HAS NOT BEEN POSSIBLE TO LOCATE ANY COUNTRY WILLING TO RECEIVE THEM.

4. VATICAN IS CONVINCED, AND NUNCIATURE HAS CONFIRMED, THAT DURING LAST MONTHS OF ALLENDE GOVERNMENT, CUBAN EMBASSY WAS SERVING AS DEPOT TO DISTRIBUTE EASTERN EUROPEAN MANUFACTURED ARMS TO CHILEAN WORKERS. ON BASIS OF THIS AND OTHER REPORTS, BENELLI CONVINCED THAT ALLENDE WAS ARMING POPULATION AND THAT STORIES ALLEGING THAT ALLENDE HAD PLANNED PRO-COMMUNIST COUP SEEM HIGHLY CREDIBLE. BENELLI SAID A RECENT ITALIAN NEWS CAST SHOWED A PILE OF ARMS THAT JUNTA HAD SEIZED ON WHICH WERE CLEARLY VISIBLE "MADE IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA" MARKINGS. IN SECOND SHOWING OF NEWSCAST THIS PORTION HAD BEEN CUT. HAD ALLENDE GOVERNMENT NOT DISTRIBUTED THESE ARMS TO POPULACE, BENELLI STRESSED, POST-COUP BLOOD SHED WOULD HAVE BEEN MUCH LIGHTER.

5. VATICAN TOLD ITALIAN LEFTIST INTERMEDIARY LAST WEEK THAT POPE COULD NOT RECEIVE ISABEL ALLENDE, AND BENELLI EXPECTS THAT THIS WILL DRAW FURTHER CRITICISM ON VATICAN.

SECRET

PAGE 03 ROME 11385 182238Z

VOLPE

SECRET

<< END OF DOCUMENT >>

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 11 MAY 1999
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PROPAGANDA, COMMUNISTS, POLITICAL SITUATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 18 OCT 1973
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973ROME11385
Document Source: ADS
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: 11652 GDS
Errors: n/a
Film Number: P750018-1092
From: ROME
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19731065/abqcegbx.tel
Line Count: 99
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, TEXT ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN ROME
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: ROME 10729
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 17 SEP 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <17-Sep-2001 by kelleyw0>; APPROVED <21-Nov-2001 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: HIGHEST LEVEL VATICAN CONCERN OVER PROPAGANDA ON CHILE
TAGS: PINT, CI, VT, (BENELLI)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005